DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 238 459 JC 830 525

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TITLE The Community College and the Human Resources Development Council: Toward a National Training Strategy for the United States.
PUB DATE 21 Dec 82
NOTE 21p.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Role; *Community Colleges; Economic Change; *Economic Development; Educational Assessment; Educational Needs; Educational Planning; *Education Work Relationship; *Labor Force Development; National Programs; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The key to economic renewal in the United States is a national human resources development strategy in which community colleges assume the national training role. This national strategy must recognize changes in the American economy and workforce, such as a more educated labor force, the demographics of developing countries, the increased participation of women in the workforce, the transition to a postindustrial economy based on service rather than manufacturing, and the dependence of economic health on exports. This strategy must focus on promoting business/industry collaboration, community- and industry-specific training programs, lifelong access to training and retraining for workers, the fulfillment of the training needs of large businesses and small enterprises, and work experience for youth. As part of the strategy, audits should be conducted of a community's educational and training programs and their effectiveness in teaching basic skills and the new literacies and in meeting the needs of entry-level, currently employed, and displaced workers. To assist in these efforts, the Association of Community College Trustees and the Business and Industry Community College Coalition propose the formation of a Human Resources Development Council (HRDC) in every community college to: (1) create business and industry diffusion networks; (2) coordinate and evaluate community training programs; (3) create a master training plan and strategy; (4) introduce new training programs; and (5) bring educational and training resources into the community. (LAL)

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THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Toward a National Training Strategy for the United States

by

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December 21, 1982

JC 830 525

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America is searching for a policy and a program of national economic renewal, a working consensus on an agenda that will revive our spirit of enterprise, restore our position in the global marketplace, revitalize those industries that should be saved, and help us develop the new industries that will be our future. Most of all, we want a set of national strategies that will keep those of us who are working on the job and equip us with the skills we will need for tomorrow's jobs; prepare those of us who are younger, or who have not yet worked for the kind of work that is emerging; and, perhaps most urgently, bring back to the workforce those who have been idled by the difficulties that have eroded our economy. Americans want to work; without work our human dignity is diminished, and we are vulnerable to the deterioration of family and community life.

Economic renewal--keeping America working and getting Americans back to work--will be a long and arduous process. There are no panaceas or quick fixes on the horizon, nor should we expect miracles from the robot and the computer. Rebuilding our economy on new foundations will involve pain and sacrifice as we discard cherished ways of doing business, and learn new roles for government, business and industry, education, and the American worker. The agenda for discussion is a long one, and the issues that the American people must decide involve difficult tradeoffs. Do we bail out the huge employers that have been the under pinnings of our economy--the "smokestack" industries; steel, autos, rubber--or do we let them find their own level while we make a speedy transition to the information and knowledge industries? Do we protect our labor-intensive industries with trade barriers that prevent goods made elsewhere from competing in our market place, or do we assume that the developing countries must be helped to create labor-intensive industries while we move

to capital-intensive high technology work for our people? What do we do about our deteriorating physical infrastructure, about tax incentives for industry, about federal aid for research and development?

There is no agreement yet in the nation on the answers to these questions. On one matter there does, however, seem to be an emerging national consensus. The success of our efforts to reindustrialize, to create the new service economy that will be powered by information and knowledge, will depend on our ability to replenish and improve our stock of human capital; what our people know will determine our future, what our people can do will determine whether they work, and whether our economy and our country work. The American worker will not be tilling the soil, but using the computer and information to increase agricultural productivity; the American worker will not be on the assembly line making steel and automobiles, but will be designing and programming the robots that will replace the assembly line. One key, then, to economic renewal is a national human resource development strategy for the United States.

The trustees of the nation's community and technical colleges, organized as the Association of Community College Trustees, believe that the proposals they now submit are the beginning of a realistic and ready national training strategy. If the business and industries of the United States agree with these proposals, if the government of our nation agrees, the ten thousand trustees of these colleges are ready to begin the work of creating a national training effort in the 50 states through our national network of 1200 colleges.

The community colleges bring assets to the human resource development effort that make them a more plausible choice for the national training role than other systems and agencies now in place, or new delivery systems that might

be invented and installed. The colleges now exist, with buildings and laboratories, and, most importantly, with thousands of faculty members who could be enlisted as teachers and trainers. Creating a new Federal training apparatus would be duplicative, expensive, and unnecessary. The community colleges have a long history of commitment to business and industry, to technical and vocational education, to community service. There is in the community college sector no tradition of the ivory tower, of town and gown, of aloofness from the contemporary, from the marketplace, from the work of the world. What is necessary is to mobilize the energies and the talents of community college trustees, academic leaders, and faculty to the new work of training; to link the colleges in new ways to the influentials of business and industry, so that the training and education offered by the community colleges are immediately and directly responsive to the needs of business and industry and, in those states where there is not yet a commitment to lifelong education in and for business and industry, to create such a climate of support and a willingness to allow the community colleges to use their resources for business and industrial training. The plans we now submit, the structures of collaboration and planning we are now proposing, would, we believe go a long way toward harnessing the resources of the community college system of the United States for these ends. We believe that the trustees, representing as they do American business and industry, having access to government and opinion leaders in their 1200 communities, can complete the job of change and mobilization inside the colleges and with the external constituencies that is required for success.

The proposals of the Association of Community College Trustees rest on a set of assumptions about what is happening to the American economy, and the demographics of the American workforce; the national training strategy we propose

emerges from the human resource requirement we believe these economic and human changes impose on us.

The Changing American Economy and the Changing American Workforce.

> "It is predictable," states Peter Drucker, "and practically certain that, 25 years from now, the proportion of the American labor force engaged in blue-collar manufacturing work will not be much larger than the proportion now engaged in farming--that is, less than 10 and not much more than 5 percent of the total labor force. Today's 20 million manual manufacturing workers comprise a full fifth of the labor force; by the year 2005, comparable figures will run between 7 and 12 million people. The events that make this scenario inevitable have already occurred and are irreversible, in this country and throughout the world. Future economic policies, whatever they might be, cannot change them."

This scenario of the disappearance of blue collar work in America rests on the structural demographic changes that will reduce the size of the new entrants to the work force in the future, and the rising educational levels of the American people that will make it difficult or impossible to recruit that smaller workforce for manual labor. Blue collar jobs in our society have been filled until now by workers with an eighth grade education, or less; by the year 2000 there will be virtually no one entering the workforce without a high school education, or beyond--thus, barring profound cultural changes or an unimaginable depression there will be few available for manual and repetitive work. The economy, then, must provide work for people whose aspirations have been raised by lengthy education, who want work that builds on the knowledge base they have acquired.

The demographics of the developing countries are perhaps as important to us as our own. While our changes will require us to create up to 50 percent more jobs for highly educated people in each of the next 20 years, theirs will require them to put their swelling and unschooled populations to work in

agriculture, businesses, and industries that are labor rather than capital and knowledge-intensive, and we have a stake in their success if global chaos is to be averted. The developing and developed countries need one another; they must negotiate economic and trade strategies that strengthen both. We cannot compete with the developing countries in labor-intensive industries and pay American wages; they cannot compete with us in high technology. A new economic order that meets the realities of our world and theirs would find us strengthening their economies through the transfer of appropriate technology and through American investment in joint ventures that would export much of the manual labor we now do at home (often with immigrant labor that might be better served if economic opportunities were available in their own lands so that they were not forced to come to the United States in search of decent work). Forces already clearly visible in our culture will also help to reshape the work force and the education it requires. Two-thirds of the new entrants to the workforce will be women, and their presence in such numbers will have profound consequences for the location of the workplaces of the future, and the creation of new personnel policies affecting schedules of work and how work is woven into the fabric of home and community life. The future American workforce will not, then, be made up, as it now is, of males--primarily white males--working full-time, but will include women in new work roles, and the elderly as well as the young, and minorities, and the handicapped. Our national training strategy must include responses to these pervasive changes in the makeup of the American workforce.

These changes in the structure of the American workforce would seem inevitable in the rapid transition of the American economy to a "post-industrial" society: an economy in which employment is in service rather than manufacturing or the extractive industries of agriculture and mining, and indeed, America has

been a post-industrial society since 1957, when for the first time in our history more than half of our employment was in the service economy.

We must move rapidly, then, to make our manufacturing more productive by a process analogous to that which has made our agriculture our most productive industry; by replacing people with machines, by powering our manufacturing by knowledge and information. There seems to be little doubt that we cannot reverse our productivity declines of recent years unless we become a high-technology society; if we fail to do so we shall find our position in the world marketplace steadily worsening as we lose old markets and new possibilities to those elsewhere who are harnessing the microprocessor, the robot, the sensor, the laser.

"It already is clear," writes Dr. Pat Choate, "that robotization will do for manufacturing what mechanization did for agriculture: increase productivity and reduce the number of jobs."

> The robotization of jobs in basic industries such as automobiles, steel, and electronics is only a foretaste of similar changes likely to occur in virtually every manufacturing industry. Robotization will not be limited to manufacturing. Banking, insurance, transportation, and communications are only beginning to introduce the advanced technologies that will revolutionize service work. The widespread adoption of electronic mail, voice-driven typewriters, fully electronic banking, and personal computers...will eliminate millions of existing service jobs.

Clearly the new knowledge jobs cannot be held by our millions of functional illiterates, or those with minimal and rudimentary basic skills. Our new educational strategy must emphasize the basic skills, and scientific, mathematical, and computer literacy. And our programs in general and liberal education must help every American to economic literacy, and political literacy, and global literacy, so that all of us can join in the search for new solutions to our domestic and international problems.

The success of foreign firms in capturing U.S. markets has made us aware of the extent to which our economic health depends on our ability to sell our goods and services to the rest of the world. In 1981 our exports amounted to $233.7 billion; despite this, our balance of trade deficit was over $27 billion dollars. Increasing our exports would seem to be a national priority. "Increasing our participation in world markets is consistent with our national objectives," declares New York State's plan for economic recovery, "and New York should lead the nation in this effort."

> The ability of our nation and State to fulfill the expectation of the American people of an increasing standard of living will be predicated, to a large extent, on recapturing our former position in world markets...
>
> In order to regain these economies of scale offered by increasing markets, it is critical that our State economic strategy vigorously emphasize participation in world trade...
>
> The State's growth in exports will be derived from the participation of medium and small companies as well as from the development of modern techniques to export services. The tactical objective of development incorporated into the strategy will require that the awareness of exporting opportunities be raised and that the inertia and uncertainty regarding selling foreign countries be eliminated.
>
> In addition, as our State economy continues to reflect a service orientation, we must become proficient at exporting services. The state possesses a highly-skilled workforce, engineers, architects, educators, whose knowledge will increasingly be in demand around the world.

These, then, are some of the forces of demography and culture, of technological change, of world economic interdependence which seem to be transforming the American economy and the nature of the work it will provide for our people. The conclusions for education and training are clear: the new education must help our people understand the new economy, it must provide them with the new literacy that is the foundation for functioning in such an economy, it must allow them to acquire new skills throughout their lives as the change makes old skills obsolete.

What the New National Training Strategy Must Do

If we believe that the quality of life in America begins with the quality of work in America we must conclude that human resource development has become a matter of public policy and public responsibility, that we can no longer afford to assume that our obligations for schooling and training are confined to the provision of a general education for youth, that the private sector or the private citizen must bear the costs of the lifelong education that our society and our economy now require. Because of "the education gap"--the unwillingness or inability to our public schools and colleges to teach the skills the economy needs--our businesses and industries have created their own apparatus of schooling that spends perhaps $50 billion yearly on teachers, books, hardware and software, classes, workshops and conferences. If those dollars could be freed, if our schools and colleges would assume their rightful responsibilities for teaching and learning, a goodly portion of these billions might be used for research and development, for entrepreneurial risk taking, for domestic and international marketing--for those activities, in short, that create wealth for America and jobs for Americans.

We must attend seriously to the widening gap between those who design and manage our businesses and industries and those who design and manage our educational institutions. There are differences in mission and methods that must be understood and respected, but academic freedom cannot be a mask for perpetuating curricula that do not prepare our citizens for work and citizenship; nor can the truism that business best serves the community when it attends strictly to business and profits shield business from considering its responsibilities to the lifelong education of those who work, or want to work. There are many

examples of business/industry collaboration: businessmen serving on boards and curriculum committees; cooperative work programs using the workplace as teaching laboratories; donations by industry of consultants, adjunct professors, equipment, scholarships; all of these are of great importance and should be expanded. What the times now require is more mechanisms for insuring close and regular sharing that would constitute the academic equivalent of "feedback": the daily flow of information between the two partners, so that inadequate programs might be strengthened, obsolete programs discarded, and new programs created.

In the past it was easier to believe that education was the creation of durable curriculum and course structures that would last, like our homes and factories, for many years. The new educational commitment must now allow for programs to serve and then to disappear, as technology changes, or markets disappear, and jobs move out of, and into, the community.

The new educational and training strategy will create programs that emerge from the differences in the socioeconomy of our communities--community-specific as well as employer-specific programs--as well as programs that provide the more permanent and transportable bodies of knowledge and skill that a mobile American population needs.

The American educational scene is characterized by a diversity of educational institutions, and there is a danger of waste and duplication if the location and sponsorship of programs are uncoordinated and unplanned. A certain amount of competition in the educational marketplace may be healthy, but each community should attempt to find ways to assess existing programs and create necessary new ones in an orderly and cost effective way.

Lifelong Training for Work

Throughout the United States, and indeed throughout the world, there is a growing consensus that one of the historic premises on which much of our present educational system rests must be transcended in the light of what the world now is: the belief, institutionalized in our buildings, our budgets, our courses, our teaching strategies, that education is for the young, and that at some point at age 16, say or 18, or 22--one has gained from education a permanent supply of intellectual capital that must last for one's working life. A variation of the belief is that society's obligation for formal training extends only to the young, and upon commencement further training is the responsibility of the citizen himself--thus, the unemployed auto worker is responsible for funding his own training--or it becomes the responsibility of other agencies of society--thus, our $50 billion training expenditure by business and industry.

The new economic and social realities require that a national training strategy provides lifelong access to training and retraining for all of those who work, or want to work--the great majority of the American people.

Those who work in our large businesses and industries need training. The highest levels of corporate management in each community need to keep abreast of the latest research and development affecting their industries, and if the information is not in the libraries and document centers of the communities, or the conferences and institutes are not locally available, industry will create its own libraries and conference centers, and send themselves around the country and the world for the necessary training. Middle management needs training, and engineers, and marketing managers, and salesmen. The workers in production need upgrading and retraining; secretaries and clerical workers

threatened by the disappearance of shorthand, have to learn about word processing, and the electronic office. As industrial equipment becomes increasingly complex, maintaining and repairing the equipment requires complex and frequent training.

The evidence is clear that the majority of new jobs that have been created in recent years have not been in our large firms and industries but in our small businesses. The service economy, the growth of knowledge work, lend themselves to entrepreneurial skill and daring, and there has apparently been a revival of the spirit of enterprise in the country. The entrepreneur often lacks a background in finance, or marketing--skills that he may need to turn his craft or technological vision into a successful and growing business. New educational and training strategies can help small businesses secure themselves, and grow, creating new jobs in their communities. New federations of machine shops and education, for example, may help small shops share access to computer-assisted design and manufacturing--technology that none of them might afford alone--and technician training for these new fields might use the same equipment that serves the machine shops. As the New York State plan suggests, small and medium sized businesses may need help in finding their way into the world marketplace, and the training agencies might provide the necessary sensitizing and the expertise.

The traditional constituency of education--our youth--will continue to be a central concern of the new educational strategy: all youth need help in entering the economy, not only the disadvantaged who need basic education, or our elite preparing the professions. Our social structure often shelters youth from the work environment, and business and industry need to help in creating opportunities for work experience for all American youth. We need better approaches to vocational counseling, and those currently employed in a field can be helpful;

we need approaches to job searching for youth; and we need "life skill" centers" in every community that help all young people (and their parents, when necessary) assess their skills and interests, practice their job search skills, learn something of the work environment, develop, if need be, their basic skills of letter and number, and acquire a marketable skill.

And in every American community the training plan must provide for the special needs of women, minorities, the handicapped, the elderly. A special word must be said about the "redundant" worker, the hundreds of thousands of American workers that have been idled by the transformation of our economy. The numbers of displaced workers will grow during the next decades, and every community owes it to these men and women to design programs of counseling, placement and training that recognize the claims they have on the rest of us.

The Elements of a Community Training Plan

The audit that each community makes of its training programs, and the plans that it develops and implements for their strengthening will look at both pre-entry training--those programs for youth and adults that equip people with basic skills and marketable skill so that they bring to the work force abilities that make them employable; and in-service training programs--those programs, whether "employer specific" and offered in the industrial environment, or centralized to serve a group of workers or businesses, that provide training and upgrading for those already in the workforce.

A community training and education audit will raise and answer the following questions:

1. Basic Skills. According to the evidence, how well is our community doing in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics? Do we

have statistics, or estimates, of the number of adult illiterates in our community? Are we dealing with our problems of youth and adult illiteracy? Would any of our industries be interested in serving as the site of adult basic skill training for their present, or future, employees?

2. The New Literacies. How well are we doing in grounding our students in sciency and mathematics? In the role and meaning of the computer? In the working of our economy, and the world economy? In "global literacy": a sense and a grasp of the forces that are simultaneously making the world a single community and fragmenting us into competing nations and systems?

3. Entry Level Skill Programs. What courses and programs are we offering in the skilled trades, in the service occupations? How well are they working? Should some be scrapped and others added? What is the state of our technician programs, and how should they be changed? Do we have programs to prepare people for the professions, such as engineering, and how good are they? If our entry programs are not "state of the art," can industry help make them so?

4. Inservice and Upgrading Programs. What programs now exist to serve those now employed in local business and industry? Are there "employer specific" programs offered in plants? Are they publicly supported, or is it assumed that industry must pay the full cost of such in-service training? Are local businesses and industries willing to allow the use of their facilities and equipment as training laboratories? Does industry encourage its experts to serve as faculty?

5. Displaced Workers Program. Is there an early warning system in the

community: a way of identifying workers threatened with job obsolescence and loss so that retraining and relocation might take place in a dignified and timely way? Are there adequate job search and placement programs in place in the community? Testing and assessment programs that help the worker to determine fields he might consider for new work? Is there a commitment to provide both short-term training so that the displaced worker might move immediately into other paid employment, and long-term training while he is so employed in temporary work so that he might be equipped for more permanent and better paying work?

The educational and training agencies of the community must be assured that the community audit does not intend to expose weaknesses in the training system to embarrass or condemn; no community's audit will result in perfect scores, any more than an audit of business practices would find the community's business leadership without failings and flaws. The intention is to learn of strengths and weaknesses so that the strengths can be built upon and weaknesses corrected.

An unblinking and candid audit that looks closely at each element of the community's training system and commitments will lead to conclusions and recommendations that will become the community's master plan for the refurbishing rebuilding of its training programs.

Creating the Partnership for Training: The Human Resources Development Council.

A succession of observers of the American scene and style have called attention to our tendency to attack problems by creating organizations; perhaps

the first was the young Frenchman, De Tocqueville whose 1835 classic, Democracy in America, carefully charted the American phenomenon he called "associations." What in other countries is dealt with by the people and agencies of nobility and power, Americans solve by creating groups and coalitions.

As typical Americans, then, we are hoping to reach the goals of the new training strategy by proposing that there be created in every community that has a community college a new organization, which we call a Human Resources Development Council.

We anticipate that there will be objections to the creation of such an organization (our community, it will be argued, has too many organizations now), on the grounds that PIC, or NAB, or the Chamber of Commerce is already doing what we propose to have done; it will be demonstrated that the functions proposed are already being performed by our community colleges through our community service division; or that the name is clumsy, or a cliche.

We submit our proposal, however, secure in the conviction that few communities have brought together under one organizational umbrella the private sector and education in a way that create the possibilities for communication and collaboration that are now needed.

The term "human resources," like the equally fashionable "human capital," has become a buzz word, because, like all cliches, it captures an overriding concern of the day, expresses in a slogan a set of convictions and a program. People, the terms suggest, are our basic resources, our capital, not machines or energy or dollars. The Human Resources Development Council (called the HRDC from this point on) is to concern itself with the development of skills and knowledge of the citizens of the community, on the assumption that people are

the community's critical resource.

The HRDC, then, housed at the community college, run by a board composed of business and industry, education, and government, will have the following functions and obligations:

-To create in each state a business and industry diffusion network, similar in mission and function to agricultural extension, that will bring into every community state-of-the-art information on economic development and technological innovation. The HRDC network will be connected to the university centers and other research and development agencies of the state and nation.

-To coordinate the training programs of the community provided by the schools, colleges, unions, and business and industry.

-To monitor and evaluate the training programs available in the community.

-To create the community master training plan and strategy.

-To see that new training programs are developed and introduced by the appropriate training agency.

-To bring into the community educational and training resources not available in the community itself.

To perform these functions the HRDC will be governed by a board composed of chief executive officers and other key business and industrial leaders; school superintendents and college presidents; government leaders; and representatives of PIC and other private sector organizations; and organized labor.

The by-laws and constitution of the HRDC will create standing and adhoc committees necessary to the performance of its missions.

The HRDC will need staff. The community college should be encouraged to budget for this function, and trustees, local sponsors, and state legislatures should legitimize the use of college funds for HRDC expenses. The community college has much in place that can be immediately mobilized for the purposes of the HRDC and the community's training strategy: classrooms, catalogs, libraries that can be business information centers, facilities for conferences and workshops, community service divisions and staff, trained technical faculty, teachers that are willing to learn how to teach in the industrial milieu. Where legislation or policy constrains the use of college funds for employer specific or on-site training, the trustees and the business and industrial leadership should work to have these constraints removed.

Using the community college as the base for the HRDC should obviate the need for elaborate fundraising. Business and industry should be encouraged to offer their facilities as teaching stations, make their equipment and specialists available, and in general to do what they can to create realistic training with as little investment by the training agencies as possible.

The HRDC will be successful if it creates a community of concern and action where none exists now: a community comprised of those who teach and those who employ their students, so that the work of teaching of work are joined and enriched.

BICCC: The National Action Plan

Creating 1,000 HRDC's in 50 states will not happen easily, will not result

from mailings and manifestos or fervent public addresses. There has to be a patient and persistent national effort to sensitize business and industry to the goals and advantages of the partnership, allay the fears of faculty, reassure and enlist legislatures and local sponsors, secure the cooperation of the media. The Association of Community College Trustees, with the support of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges is creating the Business and Industry Community College Coalition to design and mount a national organization effort that it hopes will move the nation toward a national training strategy through the formation of HRDC's.

The affairs of BICCC will be in the hands of a board composed largely of chief executive officers of major businesses and industrial firms of the nation, community college presidents and others from education will also be represented.

A generous challenge grant from HBJ/Media Systems Corporation will permit BICCC to hire a staff director and research and clerical help for the national organizing effort, and to design and implement a modest publication program.

Plans for the national campaign are not yet fixed, but there is agreement on the general direction that will be followed. At the national level, the federal government will be asked to endorse and legitimize the effort. The business and industrial influentials of the nation will be reached and their service and support solicited and that of their corporations; organizations such as the Business Roundtable, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the NAM will be asked to take part in BICCC and its HRDC effort. The major business and industrial trade organizations will be involved. The educational constituencies will receive substantial attention, including the AACJC, the teacher's organizations, the associations of teachers of the several disciplines.

A national clearinghouse of information on the formation and working of HRDC's will be created, and arrangements made to share and exchange promising training practices. BICCC will commission monographs, studies, and "how-to-do-it" manuals in the area of business/industry/education collaboration.

The ACCT is organized nationally in five regions. In each ACCT region a commission of trustees, administrators, and leaders from the private sector will be formed to design and mount regional and state strategies for creating HRDC's, and for encouraging new directions in training and education. The state directors of community colleges of each of the states will be asked to help in the creation of state strategies that, hopefully, will include statewide as well as local meeting and activities.

Perhaps most importantly, service and assistance will be available to any college and any community in the nation that wants help in the formation of an HRDC, or assistance from trustees or business leaders who have had successful experiences in training strategies.

The trustees of the Association of Community College Trustees believe that capturing the attention of business, industry and education; sensitizing the political and thought leaders of America to the importance of the effort; and creating the national training network will take, and deserves, three years of hard campaigning and organization. We are ready to devote our energy and resources to the work. Nothing on our agenda--or the American agenda--seems more important to us.

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